SECRET
Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP67-00059A000400020002-3

CUBAN COMMUNIST PARTY; PARTIDO SOCIALISTA POPULAR

The Cuban Communist Party, Partido Socialista Popular, is the largest Communist Party in Latin America. It is well-disciplined and effective; in our opinion, its activities, both overt and subversive, constitute a definite threat to US security interests.

Partido Socialista Popular is a legally organized party of 126,789 affiliates, or 6 percent of the total registered Cuban voters with party affiliations in October 1949. There are Party members in each of the six provinces, with by far the largest number in Habana, Las Villas, and Oriente. Communist membership includes about 20,000 militants with special training and subject to strict discipline. More than half of these are in Habana province, but there are a minimum of several hundred in each of the other provinces.

Communist overt activities are important both in politics and in labor. The Communists have an advantageous political position; they have held nine seats in the house of representatives for several years (they held three senate seats and the first vice-presidency of the house and senate until the 1948 elections), and the Party's political alliances with non-Communist parties in the by-elections of June 1950 have strengthened the Communist position, particularly their capabilities for using propaganda. The Communists also have an advantageous labor position, which is based on their prestige among the masses of workers, who consider them largely responsible for Cuba's progressive labor legislation, and their effective labor agitation, by means of which they are able to precipitate serious labor problems in key industries (sugar, tobacco, transport, maritime).

The Cuban Communists also work effectively through front organizations. Three of their more important organizations are the women's group, Federación Democrática de Mujeres Cubanas (FDMC), the youth organization, Juventud Socialista, and the Negro organization, Federación de Sociedades Cubanas. Some of their front organizations have been successful in attracting non-Communist intellectuals and professors; among these are the United Nations Association, the Permanent Committee for Peace and Democracy, and the Association for the Defense of Democratic Rights. There are also various foreign Communist clubs in Cuba, including the Liga Democracia Cultural China (described in 1948 as organized by the Soviet Legation and as the center of the Chinese Communists in Cuba), the Alianza Nacional de Apoyo a la Democracia China, and the Comité Cultural Ukraniano Rielo-Ruso.

The advantageous position of the Communist Party in overt activities would be lost if the party were outlawed. Such action is a possibility, but it is doubtful whether the Cuban government thus far considers it politically expedient. Communist subversive activities, however, especially those with international links, probably would be little affected by outlawing the party or by ordinary peace-time measures against Communist activity. Little is known about covert activities in Cuba, but we believe that a covert organization exists independently of the Partido Socialista Popular.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP67-00059A000400020002-3
SECRET

SECRET
Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP67-00059A000400020002-3

It has been reported that a lucrative visa and stowaway racket exists in Cuba; in any event, refugees seem to enter Cuba freely from all parts of the world, thus facilitating Communist activities in and Communist movements in and out of Cuba. Many of the refugees come from the USSR and satellite countries and wish to enter the US.

Cuban Communist leaders maintain close contacts with Moscow and with international Communist organizations, and have constant working relations with top Communists in Latin America. Lazaro Peña, top Communist labor leader in Cuba, was in Europe and Asia at least three times during 1949 for meetings of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) and also attended a meeting (presumably of the Cominform) in Prague. He also traveled extensively in Russia and the satellite countries in early 1950. Four top Communists reportedly visited the USSR in 1949 to "receive instructions". Top leaders of the Juventud Socialista visited Russia and attended youth conferences in Europe in 1949 and 1950; one of the top propaganda leaders of the Party (Carlos Rafael Rodríguez) reportedly visited Moscow and Prague in March-May 1950; and leaders of the women's front organization, FMC, visited Russia and attended various women's conferences in Europe and Asia in 1948 and 1949. Groups of Cuban delegates were also sent to various other Communist meetings and peace conferences. In short, Cuban Communists are among the leaders of Latin American Communism and undoubtedly hold key positions in any Western Hemisphere Communist apparatus that may exist, and, as indicated by Lazaro Peña's visit to China and similar movements of leading Cuban Communists, may also play a prominent part in Communist world activities.

Approved For Release 2000/06/13 : CIA-RDP67-00059A000400020002-3
SECRET